

REMARKS

Claims 44, 50 and 56 have been amended. Claims 1-43, 49 and 55 have been canceled.

Claims 44-49, 50-54 and 56-59 are pending. No new matter has been added.

Claims 44 - 49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In response, claim 49 has been cancelled and claims 44-48 have been amended to clarify that the claims are drawn to a system comprising a combination of elements, wherein the elements are configured to perform certain functions. It is respectfully submitted that claims 44 – 48, as amended, are in compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 44 - 59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USP 7,099,742 to Satake.

This rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to claims 44-49, 50-54 and 56-59 as amended.

The present application is directed to estimation methods and systems for harness processing and programs therefor. Harnesses are provided at both ends with external wire connectors and bound when used in automobiles and electronic appliances to facilitate internal wiring and cabling thereof.

The present application is directed to efficiently calculating harness costs. Harness costs may be roughly divided into material costs and processing costs. Material costs may include, for example, the cost of child components, such as wires and connectors. Processing costs may include, for example, labor costs associated with each type of processing work. Calculating these costs quickly and accurately is not easy, even for skilled people.

The claims, as amended, define methods and systems which enable database registration of the quantities and unit prices of child harness components designed in the past, reading out the

quantities and unit prices for a new harness, and making corrections thereto accordingly. This helps eliminate the need for inputting new unit prices for new components. This helps reduce the time required to calculate material costs and reduces input errors.

In other words, the amended claims are directed not merely to calculating harness costs, but also to assisting users to quickly and accurately calculate the material and processing costs of harnesses. Furthermore, the amended claims enable the inputting of instructions and information from an external terminal and outputting the harness estimation result to an external terminal. Therefore, as described in the present application with respect to a third embodiment (for example), the external terminal can obtain the harness estimation result even though the external terminal per se is not configured to execute an estimate.

In contrast, Satake describes a method of calculating the amount of an environmental load. Satake's objectives and field are fundamentally different from those of the present application. Satake fails to disclose or suggest a combination including a storage unit configured to store the quantity of child components necessary for manufacturing harnesses and a unit price in association with identification information of each harness, calculating the material cost of a harness by inputting thereto the quantity and unit price, and calculating the processing cost of a harness for each processing by inputting thereto calculation factors. Satake fails to disclose or suggest a combination configured to calculate the material cost of a harness corresponding to acquired identification information based on a read-out material cost estimation, a read-out quantity of child components and a read-out unit price. Satake fails to disclose or suggest a combination configured to calculate the material cost of a harness corresponding to the acquired identification information based on the read-out material cost estimation as well as on the quantity of child components and a unit price after a change (when the change has been made).

In the present case, applicants respectfully submit that there is nothing in Satake which suggests the desirability (and thus the obviousness) of making the combination of elements defined

by the amended claims. Applicants respectfully submit that the suggestion for the modifications proposed by the Examiner comes only from the claims themselves, not from Satake. The skilled artisan would not have found it obvious to selectively pick and choose the separate elements and concepts from Satake and then modify those elements so as to arrive at the present claims without using the present claims as a guide. Such hindsight reconstruction of the claims is not a proper criteria for determining obviousness. There must be some reason or suggestion in Satake for selecting and modifying the elements as proposed, other than the knowledge learned from the applicants' disclosure. Interconnect Planning Corporation v. Feil, 227 USPQ 543, 551 (Fed. Cir. 1985). Applicants respectfully submit that no reason or suggestion for the proposed modification can be found in either reference.

For all of these reasons claims 44-49, 50-54 and 56-59 should be allowed.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket no.

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